10 State Seed Certification Agencies (Rs. 11.70 crores), 13 State Seed Corporations (including NSC and SFCI) (Rs. 121.79 crores), 62 Institutes/Stations of Indian Council of Agricultural Research/State Agricultural Universities (Rs. 15.32 crores), 11 State Department of Agricultural (Rs. 2.64 crores), 10 Seed Testing Laboratories (Rs. 0.30 crores). This assistance was made available for strengthening the institutions and development of infrastructural facilities such as construction/modernisation of Seed Testing Laboratories, construction of seed storages, development of seed farms, setting up of seed processing plants, computerisation and procurement of farm machineries.

(b) Under the National Seed Project-III Rs. 8.15 crores was provided to the Assam Seeds Corporation for institutional strengthening and creation of infrastructural facilities and Rs. 0.98 crores to Assam State Seed Certification Agency for construction of Seed Testing Laboratory, computerisation, procurement of seed testing equipments and development of Grow Out Test Farm. Besides, assistance of Rs. 1.11 crores was also provided under the National Programme for Varietal Development to other North-Eastern States namely, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Nagaland for strengthening of seed production facilities like development of seed farms, procurement of farm machineries and setting up of seed processing plants. In addition, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Integrated Seed Development Programme for not easily accessible and remote areas", assistance of Rs. 0.99 crores was provided to Arunachal Pradesh, manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura for farmers' training, seed transportation, seed demonstration and development of infrastructural facilities for seed multiplication. Further, State Farms Corporation of India owns and operates two farms for seed production at Kokilabari and Barpeta in Assam.

Assistance to Mango Growers

3220. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 153 given in the Rajya Sabha on 28th May, 1998 and state:

(a) when Government propose to give financial assistance to the Mango Research Centres to revamp research and tap international market and also assistance to mango growers for the crop loss; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) The Indian Council of Agricultural Reserarch (ICAR) is already conducting research on mango at Indian Institute of Horticultural Research, Bangalore, Central Institute of Sub-tropical Horticulture, Lucknow and at eight other centres in the country identified under the All India Coordinated Projects on Sub-tropical Fruits. The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is supplying a research project on 'Vapour Heat Treatment' of mangoes for tapping developed markets like United States of America and Japan since these countries have banned the import of fruits without this treatment. There is no proposal to give assistance to the mango growers because mango is not covered under Crop Insurance Scheme.

उत्तर प्रदेश में जलागम विकास परियोजनाएं

3221. श्री मनोहर कान्त ध्यानी: क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार के बाह्य सहायता प्राप्त राष्ट्रीय जलागम विकास परियोजना से संबंधित चार प्रस्ताव सरकार के पास लम्बित हैं;

(ख) क्या यह भी सच है कि 8.4.1996 को 12.28 करोड़ रुपए की दक्षिण भागीरथी तृतीय चरण जलागम विकास परियोजना, टिहरी गढ़वाल, का प्रस्ताव भी इनमें से एक है;

(ग) क्या इसमें अगस्त्य मुनि जलागम विकास परियोजना, जिला चमोली की 7.95 करोड़ रुपए की योजना भी शामिल है; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो इन्हें कब तक स्वीकृत किए जाने की संभावना है?

कृषि मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सोम पाल): (क) से (घ) उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने विदेशी सहायता हेतु चार प्रस्ताव प्रस्तुत किए हैं यथा (1) कुचगाड तथा उत्तरी कोशी एकीकृत पनधारा प्रबंध परियोजना; (2) बेनलगाड एकीकृत पनधारा प्रबंध परियोजना; (3) पनधारा प्रबंध के माध्यम से उत्तर प्रदेश के पहाड़ी क्षेत्रों की पारिस्थितिकी का पुनः स्थापन और विकास; तथा (4) अगस्त्य मुनि एकीकृत पनधारा प्रबंध परियोजना।

उपर्युक्त चार परियोजना प्रस्तावों में से, क्रम संख्या (1), (2) और (3) पर उल्लिखित प्रस्ताव विदेशी सहायता हेतु क्रमशः यूरोपीय कमीशन के प्रतिनिधि मंडल, रायल नीदरलैंड दूतावास तथा विश्व बैंक के समक्ष रखे गए हैं; और क्रम संख्या (4) पर दिए गए प्रस्ताव में राज्य द्वारा सुधार किया जा रहा है।

दक्षिण भागीरथी चरण-3 पनधारा विकास परियोजना प्रस्ताव के अन्तर्गत प्रस्तावित क्षेत्र का विकास कार्य यूरोपीय आर्थिक समुदाय की सहायता प्राप्त चल रही टून घाटी पनधारा विकास परियोजना के अन्तर्गत किया जा रहा है।

State Farms Corporation of India

3222. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the chairman, State Farms Corporation of India is still continuing despite the fact that he was superannuated on February 28, 1998 and if so, under whose orders he has been continuing; and

(b) whether it is a fact that his services were also terminated by Government and if so, on what grounds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Threat by Genetically Engineered Seeds

3223. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of genetically engineered seeds containing the newly Patented Terminator gene-jointly developed by U.S. Agriculture Department and Delta and Pineland, and MNC, that switches off the reproductive cycle of a plant after a generation, as reported in the Observer dated the 17th June, 1998.

(b) whether this suicidal gene would necessitate purchase of new Patented Seeds every season by the poor farmers;

(c) whether this gene could spread to other crops also and play havoc with our food self-sufficiency and food security; and

(d) what measures Government are taking to stop this killer gene from ever invading India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The technology would necessitate purchase of new seeds every year in crops/varieties where it is introduced.

(c) It has been concluded by a number of crop geneticists that there is a likelihood of the pollen carying Terminator trait pollinating the crops in adjoining farmer's fileds. The seeds from such affected plants would again be sterile, thus resulting in poor crop stands, and far more importantly, gradual extinction of traditional varieties.

Furthermore, crop related weeds, important for natural evolution of crop species, may be affected. This concern is of special relevance to India since the country is rich in land races and wild relatives of crop plants.

There also has been an opinion that since the seed carries the sterility trait, it is less likely that transgenic material will